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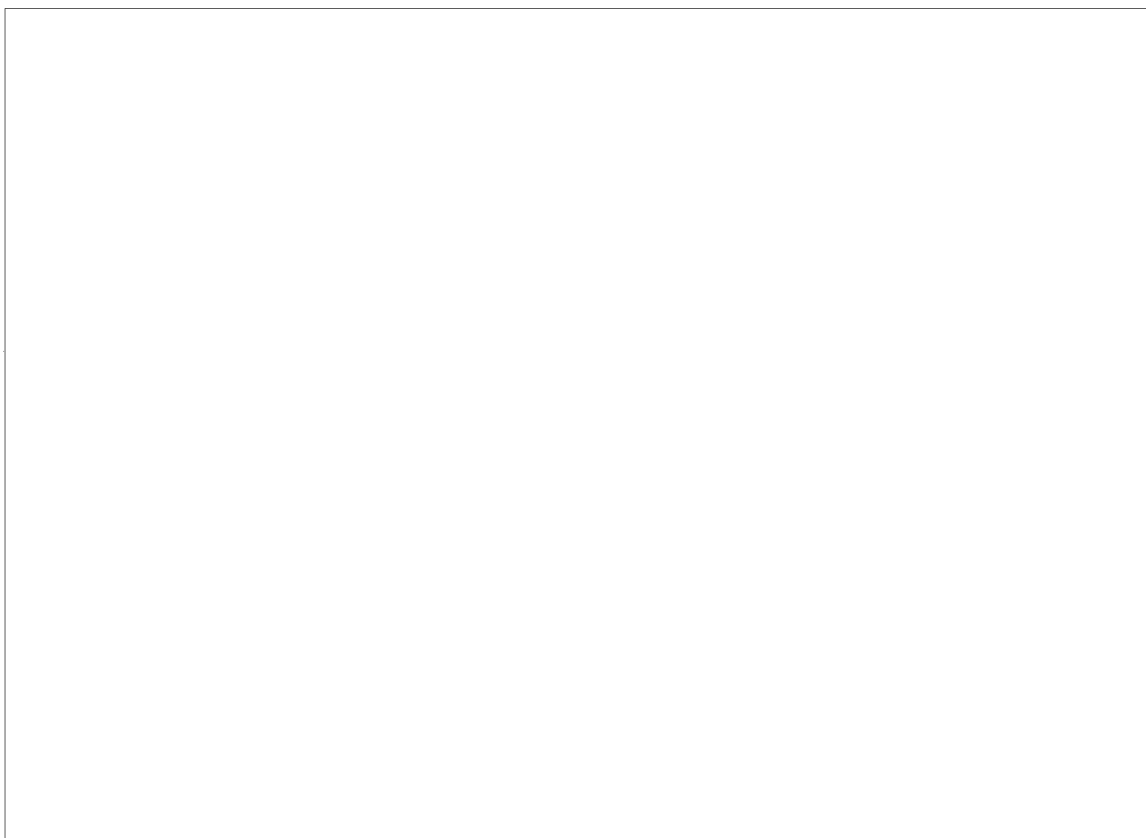
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Shield 82: Movement of Warsaw Pact Ground Forces into Bulgaria



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② WARSAW PACT: Shield 82 Ends

The Warsaw Pact's Shield 82 exercise, which ended on Thursday, increased suspicions among Bulgaria's non-Warsaw Pact neighbors that the USSR is upgrading its ability to intervene in the region, in part by leaving military equipment behind.

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Yugoslavia and Albania have criticized the maneuvers-- the largest to be held in the Balkans in a decade--as a test for intervention plans against Balkan countries. Rumors at first claimed that the Soviets would leave a unit behind in Bulgaria but more recently have centered on speculation that the Soviets will leave only military equipment and guards behind.

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There have been earlier reports that the Soviets were planning to store combat equipment sets--similar to US equipment sets stored in West Germany--to assist a more rapid forward movement of Soviet forces in the southwest theater. Earlier this year, [redacted] at the meeting of Warsaw Pact Foreign Ministers in December, the Soviets asked Romania to reserve staging facilities at three locations, while assuring the Romanians that they did not intend to pre-stock them with equipment.

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[redacted] Shield 82 was primarily aimed at testing capabilities against Turkey and NATO's southern flank. Although no Romanian unit participated, Bucharest reportedly did grant over-flight permission to Czechoslovak, Polish, and possibly limited Soviet troop transports. That decision, however, is not a significant change in Romanian policy.

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